



Division of Public Health Services

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Dear Public Health Partner:

Due to the limited influenza vaccine supply in Arizona, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) recommends further prioritization of the available supply of vaccine within the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Refer to Page 2.

The ADHS supports utilizing the limited vaccine supplies to target individuals at the highest risk of death and hospitalization. In order to achieve this, ADHS recommends a narrowing in the vaccine target populations among high priority groups, who are not at the highest risk for severe complications or death from influenza.

To this end, health care workers -- who do not have regular, close, and direct patient care -- should not receive inactivated vaccine until enough vaccine is available for them. They may consider the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), if they are healthy and are under the age of 50.

Health care workers who should be targeted to receive influenza vaccine (either LAIV or inactivated) include:

- Those who have direct, hands-on or face-to-face contact with patients as part of their routine daily activities
- Workers in long-term care facilities, who have regular face-to-face contact with residents,
- Direct patient care is defined by CDC to include:
 - Doctors, nurses, and other health care workers who care for patients
 - Other staff stationed in emergency rooms and clinics, who have frequent face-to-face contact with patients.

Health care workers -- who should **not** receive inactivated influenza vaccine unless their health places them in a priority group -- are:

- Health care workers with limited or no direct patient care
- Staff that work primarily in an office setting, even though the office is located in a hospital or clinic
- First responders, such as fire and police personnel.

Healthy health care workers under the age of 50 years old should receive LAIV, instead of inactivated vaccine whenever possible. These would include:

- All traditional health care workers (with the exceptions below)
- Paramedics and emergency medical technicians.

If a health care worker receives LAIV, that worker should avoid face-to-face contact with severely immunosuppressed patients for 7 days *during periods that these patients require a protective environment* (MMWR May, 2004, p. 17). Examples are patients with recent bone marrow transplants, with severe combined immunodeficiency, or with severe neutropenia from chemotherapy.

Proper Infection Control Gives Added Protection

Whether or not a health care worker is immunized, proper infection control measures should always be followed.

- **Wear masks within 3-6 feet of patients with respiratory illness**
- **Avoid contact with even healthy people's saliva and nasal drainage** -- infected people can have respiratory virus in their saliva and nasal drainage for 1-2 days before symptoms
- **Good hand washing before and after any patient contact** -- viruses are frequently spread by touching contaminated surfaces, and then introduced into the mouth, nose, or eyes by unwashed hands.

Remember, there is very little risk for transmission between health care workers and patients, if proper infection control procedures are strictly followed.

CDC guidance for the priority groups for receiving influenza vaccine is as follows:

- All children aged 6-23 months
- Adults aged ≥ 65 years
- Persons aged 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- Children aged 6 months-18 years on chronic aspirin therapy
- Health-care workers involved in direct patient care,
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged < 6 months

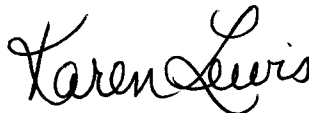
(See <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5339a6.htm> or MMWR October 8, 2004)

The ADHS may modify its recommendations based on changing information on vaccine supplies. It is within the discretion of Local Health Officials to further refine these recommendations, based on the needs of their respective counties. For further questions about influenza vaccines, contact your local health department or call the ADHS at (602) 364-3289.

Sincerely,



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State Epidemiologist (Acting)



Karen Lewis, M.D.
Medical Director
Bureau of Epidemiology and Disease Control

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